



Seminar Summary

The Czech Republic's Transition Experiences

Organized by
The Cuba Transition Project*
Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies
University of Miami

In cooperation with
Transition Promotion Unit
Foreign Ministry of the Czech Republic**

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Foreword

The Cuba Transition Project (CTP) at the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida is an important and timely project to study and make recommendations for the reconstruction of Cuba once the post-Castro transition begins in earnest. The main objective of the CTP is to prepare for and support Cuba's democratic transition. The project started in January 2002 and is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

As a resource, the CTP coordinates the production of practical studies with alternative recommendations on specific aspects of the transition process in both English and Spanish; the publication of an electronic information service which publishes *Cuba Focus* and *Cuba Facts*; and the development of a variety of databases on key issues of importance for a Cuba in transition. All the products of the CTP are available at no cost on line at <http://ctp.iccas.miami.edu>.

As part of the CTP, on October 18, 2005 the seminar, ***The Czech Republic's Transition Experience***, was held in Coral Gables, Florida at the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, University of Miami with the cooperation of the Transformation Promotion Unit of the Foreign Ministry of the Czech Republic. I am grateful for their support, as well as that of the U.S. Agency for International Development whose funding of the CTP has made these projects and activities possible.

An impressive Czech delegation gathered at this seminar to share their real life experiences of transition and to present their views on possible lessons for a Cuba in transition. The observations of one of the most successful peaceful transitions from communism to democracy of the 20th century highlighted by these experts at this seminar have been compiled here in what we hope will prove to be a useful resource.

Jaime Suchlicki
Director
Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies
University of Miami
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Introduction

By
Jaime Suchlicki

While the experience of the former Czechoslovakia is heartening and speaks to the desire for freedom, its relevance to Cuba and her future may be limited. The collapse of Communism in Czechoslovakia was the result of a weakening Soviet Union; an emboldened population; the Communist collapse in neighboring countries; and other specific factors dealing with the nature of Soviet control over Eastern Europe.

Despite widespread speculation regarding the health of Fidel Castro and its implications for Cuba's future, the probability of the current regime's survival seems higher for Cuba than it was for the former Czechoslovakia. This is due to a number of factors in the Czech experience that are missing in Cuba, and some inhibiting realities of Cuba today that were absent in Czechoslovakia.

Cuba is different. The country is dominated by an aging caudillo, the same one that made the Revolution. Like Tito in Yugoslavia or Mao in China, Castro retains a degree of legitimacy. The growing militarization of the economy, internal adjustments, growing repression, and the external support provided by Venezuela, China, tourism, and remittances from Cuban-Americans has allowed Castro to muddle through the difficult years following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Recently the government's economic policy has returned to the failed paths of the past. Increased centralization and control and greater militarization and coercion have created a cul-de-sac situation. The sufferings and misery of the Cubans have continued with no end in sight.

Castro has returned also to an emphasis on ideology, particularly anti-Americanism to motivate and engage a Cuban population, characterized by apathy, alienation, and boredom with the promises of a failed revolution. Increasingly the Cubans risk their lives in makeshift boats to escape the island; queue to obtain a visa to come to the U.S. or await Castro's death and better times. The "battle of ideas," a euphemism for ideological indoctrination and psychological pressure, is Castro's attempt to create an elusive "new man" in Cuba.

The battle of ideas, the appointment of old Marxist leaders to run the Communist Party schools, the crackdown on the Internet and the arrest in 2003 of 75 prominent dissidents are evidence that Cuba is undergoing a Chinese-type cultural revolution – albeit one slower and less dramatic than in China. An aging leader seems to be trying to purify and rejuvenate his "exhausted" revolution before departing from this world.

Yet, the Castro era may be coming to an end, if for no other reason than biological realities. Castro is 79 years old and deteriorating physically. In 2001, he had a brief fainting spell; in 2003 he fell and broke an arm and a leg. Both events, shown on Cuban

and international television, produced significant anxiety on the island and increased speculation about a future without Castro.

Succession not Transition

For the regime, the problem of succession is crucial. No totalitarian regime has been able to devise a smooth system of transition, and Castro's disappearance could touch off an internal power struggle. Most likely, however, this power struggle would take place within the revolutionary ranks rather than outside them. Despite Castro's overwhelming presence, it seems doubtful that the revolution would collapse were he to die or become incapacitated. In Cuba succession may be smooth and fast while transition may be long and difficult.

The stability of the regime is based primarily on the strength of its institutions. The armed forces are undoubtedly the most vital of the three "legs" on which the revolution stands. The other two, the Communist Party and the security apparatus, serve, under increased military supervision, to control, mobilize, socialize, and indoctrinate the population. The organization and strength of the bureaucracy that has grown up around these institutions seem to assure the Revolution's continuity.

A revolt against Castro's rule in the absence of large-scale outside intervention seems unlikely, especially as long as the Cuban armed forces remain loyal to him and to their immediate commander in chief, Raúl. The continued loyalty of the armed forces appears highly likely. A Castro creation, they have developed a large measure of professionalism, are thoroughly integrated into the political system, and enjoy an important and trusted role in the general management and control of the economy. Today, more than 65 percent of major industries and enterprises are in the hands of current or former military officers.

Opposition and dissident groups and projects have developed in the recent past. The best known is the Varela Project, which gathered more than 11,000 signatures to petition the National Assembly to amend Cuba's laws and permit free elections. For the first time in more than four decades, large numbers of Cubans peacefully mobilized to petition the government.

Castro's response was swift and brutal. He held his own plebiscite to proclaim the permanent and unchanging Communist nature of his regime and prohibit the National Assembly from considering such projects. This was followed by the arrest and sentencing to long jail terms of several dozen dissidents, journalists, and librarians, including many members of the Varela Project.

While opposition and unhappiness have been growing in Cuba, the dissident groups are weak and usually infiltrated by Cuban state security. Without access to the state-controlled media and constantly harassed by the police, these groups find it difficult to organize and operate. Many of their leaders have shown enormous courage in defying the

regime. Yet, time and again, the security apparatus has discredited or destroyed them. They do not represent a major threat to the regime.

At this time, the line of succession seems clear. If Fidel were to die or become incapacitated, Raúl Castro would succeed him as ruler. Most likely, Raúl would allow for a collective leadership, with himself remaining in command of the military and the party and for a civilian as president.

Yet the notion that the younger brother will outlive the older could be flawed. Raúl is also in frail health and could die or become incapacitated before Fidel. Under this scenario, a collective leadership would emerge, with representatives of the party and the military in key positions but with the latter exercising greater influence.

But assuming that Raúl survives Fidel and takes power, he would face significant challenges. A bankrupt economy, popular unhappiness, and the need to maintain order and discipline in the population at large, as well as to increase productivity within the labor force, are some of the more pressing problems. Raúl would continue to be critically dependent on the military. Lacking the charisma and legitimacy of his brother, he would also need the support of key party leaders and technocrats within the government bureaucracy. He thus would likely create a framework for collective leadership controlled by the military. It is probable that after a period of consolidation and harsh repressive rule, this collective leadership would initiate limited and gradual economic reforms.

Perhaps the critical challenge for a Raúl Castro regime would be to balance the need to improve the economy and satisfy the needs of the population with maintaining continuous political control. Too rapid economic reforms may lead to an unraveling of political control, a fact feared by Raúl, the military, and other allies bent on remaining in power. Some overtures to the United States also seem possible after a time, especially if no major opposition develops on the island. While maintaining an anti-U.S. posture, a consolidated Raúl regime may welcome American tourists and limited U.S. trade and investments.

Yet, the political arena is notoriously unpredictable, and the speed and success of the Velvet Revolution shocked many. While a similar wave of change may take place in Cuba, and there are valuable lessons the Czechs can offer a future Cuba, a careful analysis of external and internal factors seem to reveal that the transition experiences of these two countries will likely be radically different.

Cuba: The Issue of Transatlantic Dialogue

By
Jaroslav Kurfürst

Thanks to University of Miami for organizing the Conference and thanks for the invitation from the Czech diplomatic “Headquarters” in the U.S. – our embassy, which is and will remain committed to the Cuban question.

If Ambassador Martin Palouš were here in the US, he would be the person speaking at this gathering. He is in the Czech Republic, but dealing with the Cuban issue anyway. As we speak, Caleb Mc Carry is conducting his consultations in the Czech Republic. Cuba will also be one of the issues in Martin’s address at the Freedom Lecture at the W. Wilson Centre on November 17th. This date is equally symbolic and important for Czechs as it is inspirational for all Cubans here in the wonderful city of Miami.

The Cuban issue is a case for Czech diplomacy, because we cherish the value of principle. Our country has its own experience with totalitarian regimes, with the euphoria of liberation and the painful search for the best strategy and the best possible model of transformation. I hope that this conference will be the strategic step towards finding ideas and solutions related to transformation in various fields.

I have a great chance to look at the Cuban issue from the perspective of a diplomat sitting in the Mecca of US foreign policy in Washington, and at the same time, having a Czech background, and yet, being part of the community proudly called the European Union. This is a constellation generating thoughts and dreams about a transatlantic approach to the issue and this is something that I would like to address today.

The traditional alliance of many European countries with the US has always been based on common values. This was the philosophy behind the creation of NATO. In the Czech Republic, nobody has any doubt that the US assumed the leading role in restoring democracy to Czechs, Slovaks, Polish, and others in Central Europe. The American foreign policy of the Nineties focused on Euro-Atlantic integration, which served as a catalyst of transformation in our region. Today, we see this 15-year long period as an extremely short time in our history, which brought truly remarkable changes. The good news is that the formerly totalitarian system could be dramatically improved within 15 years. But let’s go back to US foreign policy.

Today, the ambitions and goals of US foreign policy are higher, more general and broader. The effort to support democracy ceased to cover only the countries west of Russia. The effort now is to spread democracy globally in all parts where there is critical lack of freedom – in some countries of the Greater Middle East, Burma,

Belarus and Cuba. To get more attention, the Cuban issue should be treated in this context with the US. That would be my first thesis.

The ambitions of the EU are also much higher than ever before. The effort of building a common market evolved into the effort of building a community with a common foreign policy. It is a very complex and complicated process, but the mere existence of it is extremely important for the EU member states. They are just learning to understand each other and to communicate. This process is equally important for the outside world. If those countries integrated in the EU agreed on a common policy, it would become a stronger policy. Cuba is, for the time being, the case study that shows how difficult it is for the EU to have a common position. But the EU is focused on democratization as much as the US. For the democratization of Cuba this could be an extremely strong tool: 25 strong policies, 25 strong diplomacies, 25 strong economies.

As my second thesis I would like to stress, that for the Cuban issue, the EU is a crucial front. As good news, I would like to mention a recent decision by Germany to invite dissidents to a reception commemorating the unification of Germany. This is a small but important victory at the EU.

But what about Euro-Atlantic dialogue? Countries of Europe and North America have been discussing for more than half a century strategies and foreign policy issues in NATO. But this is the forum for security and defense. The dialogue between the EU and the US has been up to now largely focused on questions like the Kyoto Protocol, visa issues, economic relations, but it is starting to address political problems also. It is my opinion that the Cuban issue could be a very strong topic for EU–US dialogue. This is a realistic institutional home for discussion about the future of Cuba. The most important thing is that the Cuban issue should attract more countries and attract them on a much higher level. This is a common task for brave dissidents in Cuba, active exiles in Miami and elsewhere, and for countries which are committed to help.

To sum up those theses, I have my own personal conclusion that there is plenty of room for Cuban topics in the EU – US dialogue. First of course, we have to have the basics of the EU common approach. We have a strong US pro-democratization policy in place; we have the “baby” called the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and we have a few countries which are determined to highlight and help to move the Cuban question forward. Internationally, the Cuban issue belongs to the Latin American context, global context (UN, Community of Democracies) and the Euro-Atlantic context. Based on my previous experience, my opinion is that the Euro-Atlantic context is the most fertile soil.

As a conclusion of my remarks I would like to “dream” a little bit about the future. Many experts in the Czech Republic have experience with the fall of totalitarian regimes, and above all, with the transformation of society into modern standards – privatization, legislative reform, security sector reform, etc. I am waiting

for that day to come, thus we can organize a follow-up seminar, where the Czech experience will be transferred to a democratically elected Cuban government. They will be in urgent need of ideas and the Czechs will enthusiastically share them.

Relevant Points Highlighted by Presenters

Panel I

Andy Gómez

- Basic human needs must be addressed first. Food, shelter, and other needs are the foundation of any successful transformation. Without these being met, other progress will be impossible, since change will not necessarily be seen as positive.
- During travels in Eastern Europe, many mentioned that the emphasis on the political and economic transformations is **misguided**. There should have been a greater focus on issues of direct importance to the lives of citizens: vital needs, ideas from communities themselves.

Marek Toman

- There is a new office in Czech government committed to political change and democratization.
- The Transformation Bureau is one year old and is overseeing a number of projects:
 - o Judicial Training in Iraq: A project training judges in the rule of law and other democratic concepts is underway. Over 200 have been trained thus far.
 - o Independent Radio in Belarus: The success of Radio Free Europe and its importance in the Czech experience makes this an important component of their programming in Belarus.
 - o Documentary Filmmaking In Burma: A program to document the Burmese experience and disseminate the information.
 - o Support of Dissidents in Cuba: Shipping of medicines and other supplies to the families of Cuban dissidents.

Vojtech Cepal

- The systemic transformation of the country is not nearly as difficult as changing the ingrained views and perceptions of a population affected by Communist rule. It may take six years to transform the economy, but sixty years to transform hearts and minds.
- There was a prevalent view in the Czech Republic that the market would change everything on its own. This raised expectations to an unrealistic level and led to some discontent.
- Values and moral conduct are the most important casualties of Communism. The general lack of trust, tolerance for corruption and other remnants of the former system severely hinder the population's ability to thrive in a system with more freedom. This must be recognized and dealt with as soon as possible.

- There are a number of important steps that are difficult, but must be taken very early in the process such as:
 - o Restitution of property
 - o Rehabilitation of victims of Communist repression
 - Other former Communist countries failed to decisively take action early to sufficiently dismantle the old system. This led to the power brokers of the old order remaining in positions of power, reaping the benefits of the new system while protecting those who helped maintain the old. In order to avoid this, these steps must be taken:
 - o All officers of the Secret Police should be fired at once
 - o All judges should be dismissed
- Without these steps, nothing will change as the powerful remain so and manipulate the new system.
- A robust legal framework is crucial, and should be the first step taken. Otherwise the corrupt will become rich before anyone else, and the population will lose faith.

Petr Mares

- The Czechs did not have any scenario or blueprint set up beforehand. A road map would have been very helpful, as the process of transformation became a very ad-hoc exercise.
- Czech exiles did not succeed in building a political party or organizing themselves in an effective manner.
- The political landscape in the new Czech Republic had no new political parties; all were ideologically built along traditional European political lines. There were also too many parties: dozens participated in the 1990 elections.
- Due to the hardships and difficult common experience, Communism as a system was legally banned in the Czech Republic. However, the Communist Party was allowed to remain and it did not change its name or its stance.
- The conflicts between Czechs and Slovaks were an unexpected consequence of the Velvet Revolution. During socialist control, these differences were officially denied and “put on ice.” After the Revolution, the disparities thawed out and were another dynamic facing the new republic.
- The transformation of human values is a crucial component of post-communist states. The former system erodes morals that contribute to a healthy, functioning society. In Mr. Mares’ opinion, this has largely been a failure in the Czech Republic, as many find it hard to erase the influence of Communist rule.
- The restitution of private property has been a positive experience, partially because it was a signal of the return of the rule of law.

Jaime Suchlicki

- While there may be some relevant lessons in the Czech experience for Cuba, it is worth mentioning that there are a number of differences between the two that may fundamentally change the framework of a transition in Cuba.

- “*Personalismo*,” or the cult of personality: With the titanic shadow left by Fidel Castro, particularly considering that a majority of Cubans have known no other leader in their lifetime, it may be harder for Cubans to rally around one leader as was the case in the Czech Republic.
- Role of the Military in Cuba: The economic control enjoyed by the military in Cuba, which controls 60-65% of Cuban economic production, is a factor worth considering.
- Racial Issues: The demographics on the island have shifted; the majority of Cubans are of Afro-Cuban or mixed descent. These groups are notably underrepresented in the current government, which may be a factor in the future.
- Proximity to the United States
- Exile Community: There is a robust worldwide community of Cuban exiles with financial capital, political influence, and a wealth of skills that could be a huge potential resource.

Question and Answer/ Open Discussion

Q: In any revolution, there is the issue of what to do with those involved in the old system. Was the question of dialogue with former participants or radical change an issue in the Czech experience?

This was an issue, particularly due to the high level of mistrust among the population. Under Communism, it was well known that there were informants in all aspects of daily life. In his opinion, Prof. Cepl sees this process as similar as to the “denazification” after World War II and it should be clearly presented as such. Prof. Cepl believes that a successful transition will not take place without this outlook and decisive action. The timing is important as well: if done late in the process of transition, “decommunization” is a mistake. It must be done effectively and early.

There was a process of “lastration,” a screening process which eliminated former participants in the Communist regime from positions in the new government, but it was not complete enough. In Mr. Mares estimation, there was “too much velvet in the Velvet Revolution.”

Q: What was land ownership like before and after the Velvet Revolution? Was there a huge shift back to large landowners, and did that create resentment?

The Czechs had a number of land reforms in the past; one in 1918 and another that spanned from 1945-47. This limited the amount of land that could be owned, as there were no huge landowners, which perhaps facilitated the process of restitution.

Panel II

Petr Greger

- The process of transformation of a society is overwhelming; the constant reforms are very taxing. Having an external source of inspiration and support is necessary for success. The knowledge that other countries were interested and invested in our success was of inestimable value.
- Dr. Greger feels that popular patriotism is the primary enemy of economic development. The specter of foreign investment must be overcome for progress to take root.
- The importance of in-depth human resource training for government employees and members of the judicial system cannot be overstated. This is a crucial component of any successful transformation. The influence of Communist rule can be particularly strong in these categories, and can also be extremely damaging if allowed to linger in these circles.
- The lack of appetite to frame laws in transparency is dangerous. Without a body of laws that value and uphold transparency, organized crime can easily flourish, leading to widespread corruption and disillusionment.
- Non-profit organizations (NGOs) have an important role to play as watchdogs of civil society. NGOs are a widely recognized non-threatening way to maintain public accountability.

Vaclav Bartuska

- There were four major issues that surrounded the dismantling of the Secret Police apparatus of the former Czechoslovakia.
 - o How to deal with the former members
 - o What to do with the archives
 - o How to handle crimes by and victims of the system
 - o How to form a new Internal Police Force
- Regarding the first point, Mr. Bartuska believes that the dismantling of the former Internal Police and Intelligence apparatus is the highest priority.
- It is also important to not overestimate the window of opportunity to do so. It is perhaps only a few months long, after which it becomes politically and logistically difficult. In the Czech Republic, over 1600 were purged, without violence. Most former policemen merely left. Informers were also caught.
- The Archives of the files kept on individual citizens was of tremendous interest to the general public early in the aftermath of the Velvet Revolution, as they were curious to see what the former regime had collected on them. The archives were closed to the public during the early phase of the transformation, but were eventually opened to the public, and remain so today.
- Crimes committed by members of the former security apparatus should be prosecuted. Some argue for the continuation of former laws which would in effect be similar to an amnesty for these officials for the sake of unity. Mr. Bartuska sees this as a mistake.
- Regarding the new Internal Security, Mr. Bartuska mentions that it still lacks an institutional vision. They also face the widespread fear and distrust of the population, as the only understanding of internal security that many have is based on the old system.

- Looking for lessons from his experience for Cuba, Mr. Bartuska warned against underestimating Cuba's internal security forces. They are the only true source of power on the island. He also warned against overestimating interest and support from the West, as he stated that there was much criticism regarding the "decommunization" and prosecution of former security personnel from the Western Left.
- Exiles also faced obstacles as they were systematically discredited by the secret police, limiting their effectiveness once they returned.

Martina Klicperova-Baker

- In the initial phase of euphoria, expectations can outstrip reality. This usually leads to an increase in discontent and a "cooling off" which may set expectations more closely to what new changes will actually provide.
- Maslov's Hierarchy of Needs was mentioned as an important concept in understanding populations' response to change. Maslov's theory contends that individuals have needs that range from the most basic physical needs, such as food, water, shelter to interpersonal, and finally needs that lead to self-actualization. If lower level needs are not met, the higher level needs become unattainable. This is a crucial concept in times of political change, because if the population's basic needs are not being met, their interest in and willingness to accept and embrace a new framework or body of laws plummets.
- Certain psychological predispositions are favorable for democracy, and the cultivation of these values in citizens is important to the success of a new democratic regime. These values include a vibrant civic culture, civility, or the morality of democratic society, and civic nationalism, meaning that nationalism is defined by values commonly held by people, which differs from ethnic nationalism.
- There is also the obstacle of the typology of citizenship, which refers to a population's view of their role in society. Many who have lived under Communist regimes have a very parochial view of the government's role in their lives, and find it difficult to shift to a framework with more personal responsibility.

Question and Answer/ Open Discussion

- Mr. Greger mentioned that there is a serious problem of opportunism among youth who received communist education. His generation, who are now 30-40 years old, may very well fare worse than the older generation due to this phenomenon of tolerance of corruption. The younger adults and the youth of today, however, are rather skeptical of the old order, are enthusiastic about prospects for individual expression and initiative and do not fall into the same mold as the generation before them.
- In response to questions concerning general complicity with the former regime and how people adapted to survive, Professor Cepl stated that living under Communist rule was like living in a state of "permanent nonsense." It was like living in a dream where reality was difficult to discern.

- Mr. Greger also touched on how, under the former regime, the concept of “decency” was somewhat of a gray area. It was widely seen that it was indecent to do things that would actively help the regime, but not to do what was necessary to survive, such as participate in the “Pioneers” youth program, attend meetings, etc.

About the Participants

(In order of Presentation)

Helena Bambasova

Mrs. Bambasova is the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Bilateral Relations and Development Cooperation. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she has also held posts in the Management and Human Resources Section, the NATO Summit Czech Task Force, and in the Administrative Section. From 1997 to 2001, she was the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. She was the Head of the Market Consumption Department for the Center for Commercial Research from 1990 to 1991.

Mrs. Bambasova graduated from the University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic in 1985.

Jaroslav Kurfürst

Mr. Kurfürst is the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Czech Republic. From 2004 to 2005, he was the Director of the Security Policy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). He was the Second Secretary of the Czech Embassy in Moscow from 1999 to 2003. From 1998 to 1999 he held the post of NATO Desk Officer in the Security Policy Department at the MFA.

Mr. Kurfürst studied at the University of Eastern Bohemia and the University of Ostrava and is fluent in French, English, and Russian.

Andy S. Gómez

Andy S. Gómez is Assistant Provost and Senior Fellow at the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami (UM). Prior to serving in this capacity, Dr. Gómez served as Special Assistant to the Provost and the Dean of the School of International Studies at UM. He is also Professor of Education at UM. He served as Undersecretary of Education and Chief of Staff for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts between 1991 and 1994.

Dr. Gómez received his undergraduate degree in International Affairs and political science from UM. He holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from Florida International University. He received his Master's in Education and Doctorate from Harvard University. In addition, he serves on the Advisory Board of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*.

Dr. Gómez' research and publications focus on the role education can play in transitional governments.

Alan S. Becker, Esq.

Mr. Becker is a founding shareholder of the Law Firm of Becker & Poliakoff, P.A. Mr. Becker oversees the firm's litigation, government relations, and international practice areas. Mr. Becker is a member of the Bar of the Czech Republic—the first practicing attorney in Florida to be licensed there.

He began his legal career in the Office of the Attorney General and as an Assistant Public Defender (1969-1972). From 1972-1978, Mr. Becker was a State Representative in the Florida Legislature. As a member of the Legislature and the Florida Law Revision Council (1975-1976), he was the principal author and/or sponsor of much of Florida's housing legislation, including the Condominium Act, as well as the Florida Corporation Act, Mechanic's Lien Act, Evidence Code and more.

Mr. Becker serves as Honorary Consul General for the Czech Republic for Florida. He is a member of Enterprise Florida, Board of Directors; former Board member of the Florida International Affairs Commission (FIAC), and served as Secretary on the FIAC Executive Committee. An active member of the Board of Directors of the Beacon Council, Miami Dade County's economic development agency, he chairs the Beacon Council's International Committee. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Florida Council of International Development and the Board of Directors of the Florida Atlantic University Foundation. He was awarded the Global Achievement Award by the Florida Council of International Development.

Marek Toman

Mr. Toman is currently assigned to the Transformation Cooperation Unit in the Foreign Ministry of the Czech Republic. He joined the Foreign Service in 1997 after having worked for 5 years in Czech State radio. From 2000-2005, he was the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Czech Embassy in Estonia.

Vojtech Cepl

Prof. Cepl graduated from Charles University (CUNI) School of Law. In 1990, he was appointed Vice-Dean of Faculty in the School of Law at CUNI. He is Vice-Chairman of the Legislative Group of the Ministry of Finance and is member of the Drafting Committee for the Czech Constitution (1992). He was appointed by President Václav Havel to be a Justice of the Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic (1993-2003). In 2003, he returned to his previous position in the School of Law at CUNI. From 2001, he is a Member of the Board of the CEELI Institute and in 2005 he was appointed Member of the International Advisory Board.

Prof. Cepl has received numerous awards and has been a visiting professor in several universities.

Petr Mareš

Mr. Mareš is an adviser to the Minister of Defense since 2004. From 2002 to 2004, he was Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. He was Deputy Chairman of the

Czech Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly from 1998 to 2002. From 1995 to 1998 he was the Head of the Institute of American Studies at Charles University and prior to that he was the Director of the Institute of International Politics (1992-1995).

Mr. Mareš received his bachelor's in History from Warsaw University in 1973. In 1978, he graduated from Charles University with a Master's degree in Philosophy. He received his Ph.D. in 1988 from the Institute for Czechoslovak and World History.

He has published several books and numerous articles on modern history and international relations.

Jaime Suchlicki

Jaime Suchlicki is Emilio Bacardi Moreau Professor of History and International Studies and Director of The Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami.

He was the founding Executive Director of the North-South Center. For the past decade he was also the editor of the prestigious *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. He is the author of *Cuba: From Columbus to Castro* (2002), now in its fifth edition, and editor with Irving L. Horowitz of *Cuban Communism* (2003). He is also the author of *Mexico: From Montezuma to NAFTA* (2001). He is a highly regarded consultant to both the private and public sector on Cuba and Latin American affairs.

Petr Greger

Since July 2005, Dr. Greger is the Chairman of the Civic Association Europlatform. In June 2003, he was nominated as external European Law Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for the area of the State Plenipotentiary for the Representation of the Czech Republic before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. Since 2003, he is a member of the Law and Legislation Advisory Board of the President of the Czech Republic. He is also Executive Director of the Euro-Czech Forum since 2001. From 1994 to 2001, he was the legal expert of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Czech Republic. He was the legal advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic from 1993 to 1994.

Dr. Greger completed his studies at Caroline University, Oslo University, and Oxford University.

Vaclav Bartuska

While studying journalism at Charles University in Prague, Mr. Bartuska was among the students who started the strike in November 1989. The result, to the surprise of many, was a peaceful overthrow of Communism (the "Velvet Revolution"). Because of his previous experience with the StB (Communist secret police), Bartuska was elected as the students' representative to the parliamentary committee, overseeing the investigation of the Communist Party security apparatus. He published his diary in a book, *Polojasno, (Partly Sunny)*, Prague, 1990).

Mr. Bartuska graduated from the School of Social Sciences at Charles University in 1992. He was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, New York from 1994

to 1995. In 2000, he was the Czech Commissioner General at the World Exhibition EXPO in Hanover, Germany.

Mr. Bartuska served as Director of the Vaclav Havel Library and sits on several boards and committees (Forum 2000, German Marshall Fund). He is currently working in the private sector and also teaches European security at New York University in Prague.

Martina Klicperova-Baker

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